# EPI Update for Friday, December 23, 2011 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

# Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- If patients are ill, remind them not to cook the holiday meal for others
- Holiday health and safety tips
- Give your patients a prescription for success
- EPI Update schedule over the holidays
- Meeting announcements and training opportunities

### If patients are ill, remind them not to cook the holiday meal for others

Outbreaks and anecdotal reports indicate that norovirus activity is high statewide. When your patients present with vomiting and diarrhea please remind them to stay home, even if that means missing a holiday party. It is even more important that they do not cook for others until they have been well for at least 48 hours.

For more information about norovirus, visit <a href="www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Foodborne.aspx">www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/Foodborne.aspx</a>. For additional safe cooking advice from the FDA, visit <a href="http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForConsumers/ByAudience/ForWomen/ucm121874.pdf">http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForConsumers/ByAudience/ForWomen/ucm121874.pdf</a>

#### Holiday health and safety tips

The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and reflect. They are also a time to pay special attention to your health. Please follow these holiday tips to give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others:

- Wash hands often
- Stay warm
- Manage stress
- Travel safely
- BE smoke-free
- Get check-ups and vaccinations
- Watch the kids
- Prevent injuries
- Handle and prepare food safely
- Eat healthy and be active

To hear these tips and more in a song from the CDC, visit <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/family/holiday/12waysSong.htm">www.cdc.gov/family/holiday/12waysSong.htm</a>

#### Give your patients a prescription for success

Health care providers, think of the last 10 patients you saw who smoke. Did you encourage them to quit? Did you offer resources? Well, they would probably appreciate the help. According to the most recent Iowa Adult Tobacco Survey, 83 percent of Iowans who smoke actually want to quit.

Give them a prescription for success by referring them to Quitline Iowa. Just have them call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get started. It's free and will more than double your patients' chances to quit for good. You can also take advantage of the free fax referral system. Click here to get the form

and fax it to 1-866-688-7577 (new number). Quitline Iowa will initiate contact, thus saving your patients from having to make that first tough call themselves. (Note: Medicaid recipients will need a different <u>form</u> from you to get free cessation medication.)

For more information, visit www.quitlineiowa.org.

## **EPI Update schedule over the holidays**

The next EPI Update will be sent on Friday January 6, unless emergency issues arise.

# **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**None

We wish everyone healthy, happy and safe holidays! Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology Iowa Department of Public Health 800-362-2736